

**COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 13, 2021**

Present: John Whritner
Marge Caste
Michel Bekech
Joan Bengtson
Joe Palazzo
Ilene Harris

FILED

Sept 17, 20 21 AT 11:44 AM/PM
Brooke Green ATC
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Absent: B.B. Smith

Also Present: Cathy Wilson, Director
Rose Ann Hardy, Ex officio

1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

- a. Pledge of Allegiance. The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.

Chairman Whritner called the September 13, 2021 Commission on Aging Regular Meeting to order at 5 p.m.

- b. Delegations. There were no guests.
- c. Approval of Meeting Minutes July 12, 2021. Mr. Whritner asked for additions, deletions, or corrections to the July 12, 2021 Commission on Aging Minutes.

MOTION (1): Mr. Palazzo moved to approve the July 12, 2021 Commission on Aging Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented. Seconded by Ms. Caste (6-0) Unanimous

- d. Correspondence. No new correspondence was received.

2. STATUS REPORT

- a. Transportation. Ms. Wilson reported all vehicles will go in for annual lift inspections. All transportation is doing well.

- b. Senior Trips.

1. Enrichment Trips. On September 8 a trip will be held to Bill's Seafood in Westbrook for lunch and shopping. The trip fee is \$5pp. A second trip to Bill's Seafood is scheduled for September 22nd if enough people register for it.

Day Trips. Ms. Wilson reported on September 16 a trip will be held to the New York Botanical Gardens. The trip fee is \$72pp. There is a wait list for this trip.

On October 5 a trip will be held to Boston for a Van Gogh exhibit with lunch on your own at Quincy Market. Two busses will go. On December 9 there will be a trip to the Newport Playhouse and Cabaret Restaurant. The trip fee is \$110. There is a wait list for this trip.

Overnight trips. Ms. Wilson informed the Commission the overnight trips are not doing well. We planned a trip to Lancaster, Pennsylvania to see "Queen Esther" at the Sight and Sound Theatre and only nine people were interested for three days and two nights. Another trip is planned for one day.

c. Programs

1. Senior Nutrition Program. Ms. Wilson reported the Café on Tuesdays and Thursdays in August has been minimally successful. Ledge Light did its health inspection and we received 99%. There has been no change for Meals-on-Wheels.
2. Senior Center Programs Ongoing. Ms. Wilson informed the Commission we started a new session in July. It picked up in August. We will renew for a new session next week. Programs have been decently attended.
3. Senior Center Programs. Ms. Wilson reported the VNA will no longer hold a Flu Clinic at the Senior Center, because many other options are available. We wish to have the Foot Clinic hours extended. We used to have access to the East Lyme High School gym. It has been suspended. There is no open time in the gym during our hours. She plans to contact the Middle School.
4. Budget-General Fund, Revolving Account. Ms. Wilson stated the budget is doing fine. This is the first year all programs will come out of the Special Revenue Fund.
5. Revenue. Ms. Wilson reported revenues are doing well.

3. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Status of the Senior Center and COVID 19. Ms. Wilson reported as of August 13 the town has directed anyone desiring access to a town building is required to wear a mask.
- b. Potential Expenditures for Federal COVID Money. Ms. Wilson would like the following COVID related expenditures: to replace the hand faucets in the restrooms and lighter tables. The lobby of the Community Center will have a touchless water fountain.
- c. Other Pertinent Business. Ms. Wilson informed the Commission American Rescue funds will be used for cameras in the parking lot. The Police Department is working with its vendor.

4. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Potential Feasibility Status. Ms. Wilson distributed copies of information from the Lymes' Senior Center on its Renovation Facility Study. The Commission will discuss this at the next meeting of the Commission. Ms. Wilson felt we may want to do this with other agencies at the Community Center. She felt all agencies need more storage and space. Ms. Hardy suggested that she look up the deed and the 1987 meeting minutes when it was approved. She stated initially it was to have a basement and an upper story. That was not approved. Much of the space in town is landlocked by housing development. We have two or three lots that she felt need to be sold and the money received used for something more appropriate. The North Bridebrook Road developer wants to put in a church with 74 parking spaces. There isn't any land available in a central location. Ms. Harris asked if there is extra land on the new Public Safety property? She replied two developers are putting in affordable housing. This is a major issue to come before the Zoning Commission.

b. Other Pertinent Business. There was none.

5. EX OFFICIO REPORT

Ms. Hardy felt the Registrars should be at the town hall. Parks and Recreation are drawing more people. The Commission on Aging has responsibility to seniors at senior housing. She added for affordable housing they may come forward with a proposal for as many units they wish to have. Only 30% needs to be affordable housing. The state suggests a goal of 10% for every town to be affordable. You cannot use existing older housing. The developers want it. Now the state is increasing pressure if the town fails to be working towards the 10%. The state will not give the amount of support it normally gives to the town if it isn't working towards the 10%. She spoke to State Rep. Holly Cheeseman and Senator Paul Formica and they cannot compete with the cities. There is another proposal allowing a one-acre property to permit an ancillary apartment or separate housing. There are two public acts: A lawsuit states one overrules laws passed by the government. Every ounce of cannabis sold in a town it receives 3%. The state cannot pass laws that supersede the federal government. This will go to a Public Hearing or town meetings for residents to express their concern. There will be a Public Hearing on the church proposal at the next Zoning Meeting. We are expected to have a four-lane highway by 2024. They would like to have mass transit for lower income people. Our town consists of 43 square miles and we have only three police officers on any given shift.

Mr. Bekech reported we will have reevaluation. Property values have increased. Houses have been sold for more than the asking price. This impacts our residents over 65. Ms. Hardy felt the demographics have a large affect if the state will penalize towns for affordable housing.

6. PUBLIC DISCUSSION

There were no guests.

7. BOARD RESPONSE

There was no response.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION (2): Ms. Bengtson moved to adjourn the Commission on Aging September 13, 2021 Regular Meeting at 5:45 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Bekech. (5-0) Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frances Ghersi, Recording Secretary